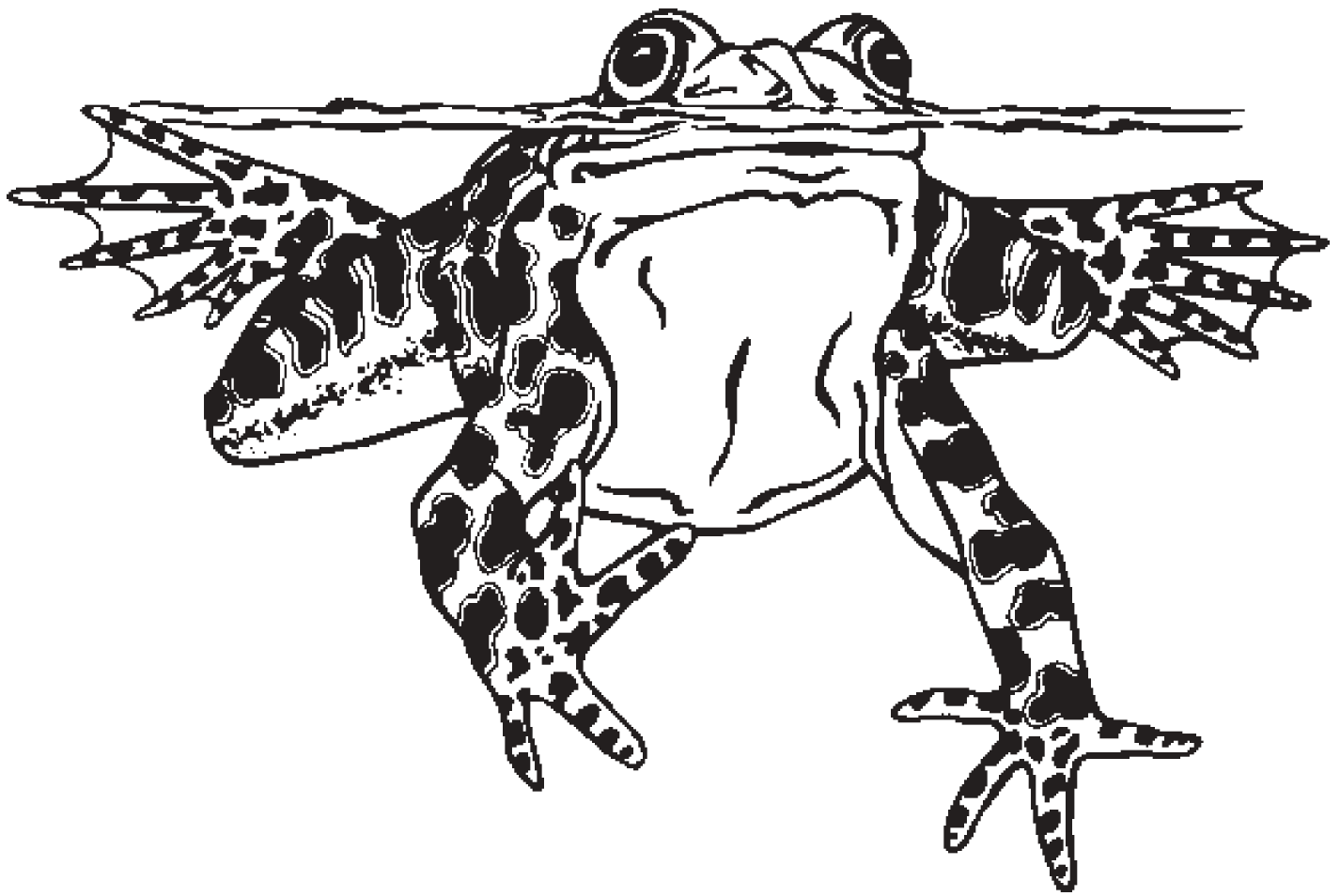


Indiana Native Frog and Toad Species



Indiana Amphibian Monitoring Program
Wildlife Diversity Section
402 W. Washington St., W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204

317-232-4080
www.IN.gov/dnr/fishwild/endangered



American toad

Bufo americanus

Description:

2" - 3 1/2" (5.1 – 9.0 cm). Brown to gray, reddish or olive; may be ornamented by patches of yellow or buff. Only one or two large warts in each of the largest dark spots on back, chest and forward part of abdomen usually spotted with dark pigment, enlarged warts on tibia, parotoid gland either separated from the ridge behind the eye or connected with it by a short spur. Light middorsal stripe may be present.

Call Description:

A long (30 seconds) high-pitched musical trill. Male's vocal sac is round when inflated.

Indiana range:

Throughout Indiana with exception of the lower Wabash valley.

Habitat:

Common in a variety of habitats wherever there are insects, moisture, and a variety of shallow waters for breeding; suburban backyards, forests, and meadows.

Breeding Habitat:

Temporary wetlands, swamps, shallow bays or lakes and backwaters of rivers, streams and ditches.

Breeding Season:

Late March – late June.

Diet:

Terrestrial vertebrates, spiders, centipedes, sow bugs.

Eggs:

Deposited in long, double strings that may stretch for several feet. Female lays up to 20,000 eggs, which normally hatch within one week.

Tadpoles:

Tiny, dark; attach underwater to vegetation. Large schools feed together along the edge of shallow wetlands, emerging as a mass of tiny toads within approximately six weeks. Maturity occurs in 2-3 years.

Bullfrog

Rana catesbiana

Description:

3 1/2" – 6" (9 – 15.2 cm). Plain green (sometimes brown, yellow, or albino) with dark markings. No dorsolateral ridges on the back; ridge of skin begins behind eye runs over eardrum, and ends at the base of the front leg. Skin is smooth, large external eardrum (larger than eye in males), feet are fully webbed except for last joint of longest toe, belly cream colored. Have pouches to make throat and sides of body expand to give illusion of larger size.

Call description:

Deep bass notes similar to a foghorn or like drawing a bow across a bass fiddle, slowly repeated; can be heard for 0 mile.

Habitat:

Ponds, lakes and slow-moving permanent streams with vegetation for cover.

Breeding habitat:

Breeding occurs in permanent bodies of water.

Breeding season:

Mid-May – end of July

Diet:

Eats anything it can swallow, crayfish, beetles, dragonflies.

Eggs:

Deposited in huge, slime-floating masses that look like mats of frothy tiny bubbles. One female may lay up to 20,000 eggs. Mass may be two feet in diameter and hatches within a week.

Masses are attached to submerged vegetation.

Tadpoles:

Olive green, underneath white or cream colored, similar to Green Frog tadpoles. May take two years to transform and reaches maturity within three years.

Western chorus frog

Pseudacris triseriata

Description:

3/4" – 1 1/2" (1.9 – 3.8 cm). Smooth skin, brown to gray, underneath cream. Variable middorsal pattern that may be striped, partly striped, spotted or lacking. Light line along upper lip, dark stripe from snout to groin and passing through the eye.

Call description:

A vibrant, regularly repeated crrreek or prrreep (roll the r's) speeding up and rising in pitch toward the end. Sounds like running a finger over the teeth of a comb.

Indiana range:

Most of Indiana.

Habitat:

Damp meadows, marshes, swamps, temporary ponds, and wooded bottomlands.

Breeding habitat:

Temporary shallow ponds, flooded fields, river backwaters, lake edges and roadside ditches.

Diet:

Invertebrates, ants, spiders, beetles, small snails

Eggs:

Females attach clumps of up to 100 eggs to vegetation. Eggs hatch within 18 days.

Tadpoles:

Dark brown to gray, ventral skin bronzy with lighter flecks, upper half of tail musculature is darker than lower, tail fins clear with dark flecks. Transform within three months, becoming mature adults within one year.

Crawfish frog

Rana aerolata

Description:

2 1/4" – 4 1/2" (5.7 – 11.4 cm). Stubby body; cream to brown to black depending on temperature and activity conditions, irregular dark spots on back and sides sometimes fused into horizontal blotches, yellow dorsolateral folds, skin smooth to warty.

Call description:

A loud, deep, sometimes chuckling, guttural snore with considerable carrying power. Large choruses sound like hogs at feeding time.

Indiana range:

Southwestern and west-central Indiana with an isolated population in the southeast region of the state, very uncommon. **Endangered in the state.**

Habitat:

Moist meadows, prairie woodlands and pine scrub; typically found in crawfish holes without chimneys that contain water, but may also be found in small mammal burrows and holes in roadside banks.

Breeding habitat:

Ponds that may be in the open or wholly or partly in the woods. Avoids ponds with fish.

Breeding season:

Mid-March to mid-April.

Diet:

Mostly nocturnal beetles.

Eggs:

Masses of 3,000 – 7,000 eggs attached to stems in ponds, similar to leopard frogs.

Tadpoles:

Similar in appearance to leopard frog tadpoles. Dorsal color grayish brown to greenish with small black dots on body and tail, underneath whitish and internal organs visible through skin.

Cricket frog

Acris creptians

Description:

5/8– 1 1/2" (1.6 – 3.8 cm). Somewhat warty, dark stripe on rear surface of thigh, dark triangle between eyes. Green or reddish stripe (or broken stripe) sometimes present on back. Slightly blunt snout, legs relatively short, heavy webbing of hind foot reaching tip of first toe and next to last joint on longest toe; toe pads absent. Diurnal. Males have single yellowish vocal pouch beneath chin.

Call description:

Gick-Gick-Gick. Like two steel balls clicked together, slowly at first, picking up speed until a continuous rattle, then decreasing, continuing for 20-30 or more beats. Males call day and night from the bank or from mats of floating vegetation.

Indiana range:

Nearly every county in Indiana, has become rare in northern quarter of state in the last 25 years.

Habitat:

Sunny ponds with shallow water and good growth of vegetation in water or on shore; slow moving streams with sunny banks. Also found on the sandy, gravel or muddy bars and banks of small sluggish streams. May occasionally be found far from water on adjoining ridges.

Breeding habitat:

Prefers to breed in wetlands and streams with adjacent mudflats and abundant emergent vegetation.

Breeding season:

Mid-April to end of July.

Diet:

Larva of aquatic beetles, spiders, midge larva.

Eggs:

Attached to submerged objects and vegetation singly or in small clusters. One female can lay 200 eggs in surface clusters of 10-15 eggs each.

Tadpoles:

Bottom dwelling and secretive, sometimes has dark tail tip. Becomes mature within one year.

Fowler's toad

Bufo fowleri

Description:

2" – 3" (5.1 – 7.5 cm). Three or more warts in each of the largest dark spots on back, typically a single dark spot on chest and belly, parotoid gland touches cranial ridge behind eye. Dorsal color brown, gray or greenish to brick red, a light middorsal stripe.

Call description:

A short unmusical bleat, a nasal w-a-a-a-h, lasting one to four seconds, like the sound of a lifeguard whistle.

Indiana range:

Throughout Indiana.

Habitat:

Wooded country, hides in burrows and vegetation; likes sand and loose soil.

Breeding Habitat:

Warm, shallow waters that are fairly open, including woodland and farm ponds, lake edges, stream backwaters, marshes, sloughs and natural pools between dunes or along beaches.

Breeding season:

Late April - mid-July.

Diet:

Insects, spiders, centipedes, millipedes.

Eggs:

Strings of 7,000 – 10,000 eggs are attached to vegetation in shallow water. Hatch in 2 - 7 days.

Tadpoles:

Tiny, dark; attach underwater to vegetation, swim in dense groups, similar to American Toad tadpoles. Transform in 30 - 40 days and reach maturity by 2 years of age.

Cope's gray treefrog

Hyla chrysoscelis

Description:

1 1/4" – 2" (3.2 – 5.1 cm). Slightly warty skin, green to brown, gray, or almost black. Light spot beneath eye, bright yellow or orange on concealed surfaces of hind legs. Large toe pads on tips of fingers and toes for climbing vegetation. Cope's Gray Treefrogs tend to be smaller and have smoother skin, but indistinguishable physically in the field from Eastern Gray Treefrog. Can only be distinguished in the field by their calls.

Call description:

Short loud flute-like trill, faster and harsher than Eastern Gray Treefrog.

Indiana range:

Not well known. Southern Indiana, north to around Muncie.

Habitat:

Trees or shrubs growing in or near water, descend only at night, usually just to chorus and to breed.

Breeding habitat:

Shallow wetlands, including wet meadows and shrub swamps.

Breeding season:

Mid-April – end of July.

Diet:

Arboreal insects.

Eggs:

Light colored, gray above and white below. Deposited in a film of loose clusters up to 40 eggs, attached to vegetation near water surface. Hatch in 2 - 5 days.

Tadpoles:

1/4 inch in length, light yellow color, full sized tadpoles have olive green body, sometimes have a brick red tail. Similar to Eastern Gray Treefrog. Transform within two months and adult reaches maturity within two years.

Eastern gray treefrog

Hyla versicolor

Description:

1 1/4" - 2" (3.2 – 5.1 cm). Slightly warty skin, green to gray or brown, light spot beneath eye, bright yellow or orange on concealed surfaces of hind legs. Large toe pads, a rough or bumpy dorsal skin usually with darker blotches. Indistinguishable physically from Cope's Gray Treefrog. Can only be distinguished in the field by their calls.

Call description:

A short, loud flute-like trill, slower and more melodic than Cope's Gray Treefrog. May call while perched in tree branches.

Indiana range:

Not well known. Northern Indiana; may range south of Indianapolis.

Habitat:

Trees or shrubs growing in or near water, usually come down only at night.

Breeding habitat:

Shallow wetlands within or near forested habitat.

Breeding season:

Mid-April – end of July.

Diet:

Arboreal insects.

Eggs:

Light colored, gray above and white below, deposited in a film in clusters of up to 30 eggs, sometimes singly on underwater vegetation near water surface. Hatch in 2 - 5 days.

Tadpoles:

1/4 inch in length, light yellow color, full sized tadpoles have olive green body, may have brick red tail. Similar to Cope's Gray Treefrog. Transforms within two months and adult reaches maturity within two years.

Green treefrog

Hyla cinerea

Description:

1 " - 2 " (3.2 - 5.7 cm). Often bright green in color with pale to yellowish stripe along sides that may extend to groin. Side stripes may not be present on all individuals. Coloration can vary with from pale yellow to greenish-gray. Gold flecking can occur on the back of individuals, but may not be present on all specimens.

Call description:

Call resembles that of a rising "cowbell" and can be expressed by a nasal queenk-queenk-queenk. Call may be repeated up to 75 times within a minute

Indiana range:

Southern edge of Vanderburgh County near the Ohio river.

Diet:

Insects or other small invertebrates.

Habitat:

Swampy habitats, but will utilize the edges of ponds, lakes, and streams.

Breeding habitat:

Permanent marshes, swamps, or sloughs

Breeding season:

May-August

Eggs:

Eggs are black, brownish and white, or cream and are found in small packets at or near the surface, attached to floating vegetation

Tadpoles:

Tadpoles are approximately 1 3/5 inches in length with a long and pointed tail. The body is green with a yellowish or ivory stripe on the side of the head from snout to eye

Green frog

Rana clamitans

Description:

2 1/4" - 3 1/2" (5.7 – 9 cm). Green to brown or tan. Dorsolateral folds from eye to groin, same color as body. Large head, snout bluntly pointed, large external eardrum, large eye, small warts, ventral skin smooth, long limbs. Webbing extends almost to tips of all toes but fourth. Chin and throat of male bright yellow, female white. Small irregular sooty dorsal spots, black on legs, ventral surfaces white to smoky gray.

Call description:

Sounds like a plucked banjo string or a tight rubber band. Notes given at irregular intervals, repeated rapidly sometimes.

Indiana range:

Throughout Indiana.

Habitat:

Edges of ponds, springs, marshes, slow sections of streams.

Breeding habitat:

Breeds in permanent bodies of water.

Breeding season:

May – end of July.

Diet:

Beetles, flies, caterpillars, grasshoppers.

Eggs:

Tiny, black. Up to 7,000 eggs in filmy egg mass that initially floats on water's surface, about a foot in diameter. Anchored by underwater plants in shallow water.

Tadpoles:

Plump body and tail long with high fins, dorsal color yellowish brown to olive dotted with black, bottom ivory to cream. Similar to Bullfrog tadpole. Most tadpoles overwinter the first year and transform the following summer. Maturity is reached two years later.

Northern leopard frog

Rana pipiens

Description:

2" – 3 1/2" (5.1 – 9 cm). Green to brown, rounded spots with light borders, light stripe on upper lip. Dorsolateral ridges typically whitish and extending to groin, sides pale gray tinged with yellow and pale green. Ventral sides white to green sometimes with sprinkling of dark pigment on chin, throat and chest. Slender and narrow-headed, webbed toes except fourth. Similar to Southern Leopard Frog, but Northern Leopard Frog has a slightly blunt snout, usually with a single spot on it.

Call description:

Deep, rattling snore, 3 seconds in duration, interspersed and followed by “chuckling” sound, like a heavy creaking door slowly opening. Similar to Pickerel Frog. Difficult to distinguish from Southern Leopard Frog unless heard same night.

Indiana Range:

Northern, central and extreme southeastern Indiana. **Species of Special Concern.**

Habitat:

Freshwater sites with profuse vegetation, marshes, moist fields, lakes, streams, rivers, ponds. During summer, they wander through moist vegetation far from standing water.

Breeding habitat:

Marshes, wetlands, and fishless ponds.

Breeding season:

Mid-March – end of April.

Diet:

Insects, earthworms, spiders, centipedes.

Eggs:

Females can lay more than 6,000 black eggs in a globular mass attached to aquatic vegetation. Eggs hatch in 13 - 20 days.

Tadpoles:

Young tadpoles are dark grayish brown with gold flecks and sometimes light stripes about the snout. Older tadpoles are olive brown to green often with darker spots, belly iridescent and internal organs visible. Tail lighter than body, tail fins transparent with fine dark lines.

Plains leopard frog

Rana blairi

Description:

2"- 3 1/2" (5.1 – 9.5 cm). Similar in appearance to other leopard frogs. Brown to buff, large dark spots between yellow dorsolateral ridges. Dorsolateral ridges interrupted just anterior to groin and inset medially. Light tympanum spot and colored jaw line. Rare in Indiana.

Call description:

Chuck-Chuck-Chuck. Abrupt guttural notes, two or three a second, rarely heard. Call does not typically vary in pitch.

Indiana range:

Perhaps extirpated in Indiana. Typically found in open prairie regions. Records of occurrences in Benton County, other western counties (Newton, White, Lake, Warren and Tippecanoe) might have occurrences. **Species of Special Concern.**

Habitat:

Prairies; grassy, moist areas along ponds, streams and marshes.

Breeding Habitat:

Quite waters, similar to that of other leopard frogs.

Breeding Season:

Mid-March – mid-May, with onset of warm rains.

Diet:

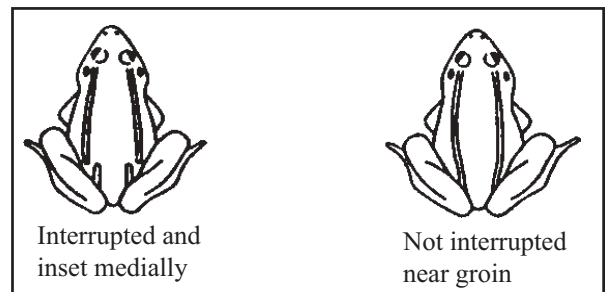
Grasshoppers, beetles, crickets.

Eggs:

Eggs are laid in clumps, globular, attached to aquatic vegetation. Hatch in a few days.

Tadpoles:

Very similar to those of other leopard frogs. Dark grayish brown with gold flecks, sometimes light stripes on snout, older tadpoles are olive brown to green often with darker spots. Belly iridescent and viscera visible, tail lighter than body, tail fins transparent with fine dark lines.



Southern leopard frog

Rana sphenocephala

Description:

2" – 3 1/2" (5.1 - 9cm). Similar to the Northern Leopard Frog. More bronzy than green, large dark spots between light colored dorsolateral ridges, snout spot absent or very small, dark crossbands on femur and tibia. Has narrower, pointier snout than Northern Leopard Frog. Slender and narrow-headed. Light line on upper jaw, light tympanum spot.

Call description:

Series of short, throaty, chuckle-like, guttural trills, fewer than 13 a second. Hard to distinguish from Northern Leopard Frog unless heard on the same night.

Indiana range:

West-central and southern Indiana.

Habitat:

Freshwater, brackish marshes, ventures away from water in summer when vegetation provides shelter and shade.

Breeding habitat:

Ponds, ditches and quite backwaters of streams. Sites are often shallow and temporary.

Breeding season:

Early March – end of May

Diet:

Insects, earthworms, spiders, centipedes.

Eggs:

Globular mass of 3,000 - 5,000 eggs attached to stems. Usually hatch in 7 - 12 days.

Tadpoles:

Back is black or dark grayish brown with gold flecks, sometimes light stripes about snout, older tadpoles are olive brown to green often with darker spots. Belly iridescent and viscera visible, tail lighter than body, tail fins transparent with fine dark lines. Similar to other leopard frogs. Transforms in 2 – 3 months.

Pickerel frog

Rana palustris

Description:

1 1/4" – 3" (4.4 – 7.5 cm). Brown or tan, smooth skin, rectangular spots, without light borders, in parallel rows down the back. Bright yellow or orange on inside surfaces of hind legs. Light stripe on upper lip, dorsolateral ridges that extend to the groin.

Call description:

Low-pitched, steady snore, increasing in loudness, 1 or 2 seconds in duration, with little carrying power. Similar to leopard frog but more regular. Males may call while completely submerged in water.

Indiana range:

Throughout Indiana except northwestern prairie portions and lower Wabash valley. Not common.

Habitat:

Cool, clear waters of streams and spring-fed lakes, slow moving waters, damp areas with low dense vegetation, swamps, meadows.

Breeding habitat:

Backwaters of rivers and streams.

Breeding season:

End of March – end of April.

Diet:

Terrestrial insects and other invertebrates.

Eggs:

Globular mass attached to underwater objects. Hatch in approximately two weeks.

Tadpoles:

Closely resembles leopard frog, tail fins uniformly and densely pigmented or marked with large dark blotches. Transform in 60-80 days.

Eastern spadefoot toad

Scaphiopus holbrookii

Description:

1 3/4" – 3 1/4" (4.4 – 8.3 cm). Indiana specimens reach a length of about two inches. Stout body, head wider than long, eyes large and strongly protuberant, pupils elliptical. Gray to olive, brown or nearly black, often with two irregular light or yellowish lines originating at each eye and running down back, may form a rough hourglass shape. Skin relatively smooth, with scattered tiny warts. Underside white to grayish. Sickle-shaped spade on each hind foot. Toes of hind feet have thick web extending to tips of all but fourth toe, external eardrum apparent. Nocturnal.

Call description:

“Wank” or “Wahr”, a short, low-pitched explosive grunt, with 2-second interval. Sounds like a coarse, low-pitched call of a young crow. May be heard for a half mile. Males call both day and night usually as they lie floating at the water surface.

Indiana range:

The southern third of Indiana. Occur in flood plains of lower Wabash and White rivers and in barrens or relic prairies of Harrison County. **Species of Special Concern.**

Habitat:

Forested, brushy, or cultivated areas of sandy, gravelly or loose loam.

Breeding habitat:

Shallow, temporary pools often located in cultivated fields or other open areas.

Breeding season:

Mid-April - mid-July, initiated by heavy rainfall.

Diet:

Caterpillars and beetles.

Eggs:

Laid in easily broken, gelatinous bands, attached to aquatic vegetation; eggs are very small and dark. Hatching occurs in 24-72 hours in hot summer weather or up to one week.

Tadpoles:

The color is dark brown on top with bronzy iridescence, finely dotted with orange that continues as a stripe onto tail, tail fins transparent with narrow, dark rims. Transparent skin

Spring peeper

Pseudacris crucifer

Description:

3/4" - 1 3/8" (1.9 – 3.5 cm). Females larger. Range from light tan to dark brown, able to change skin color within this range in fifteen minutes. Underneath white, vocal sac greenish. Most have an X-shaped dark mark on back. Have little webbing on feet, rounded large discs on toes. Head short and wide with bluntly pointed snout. Dorsal skin smooth ventral skin coarsely granular, slender legs and toes.

Call description:

Peep, peep, peep, peep. Short, high-pitched note, repeated every second, that rises at the end. In unison with other peepers, makes a large chorus that sounds like the jingle of sleigh bells.

Indiana range:

Throughout Indiana.

Habitat:

Wet meadows, woodland ponds, lakes, bogs, and wooded areas in or near ponds and swamps.

Breeding habitat:

Fishless temporary wetlands associated with forested habitat.

Breeding season:

Early March – mid-May.

Diet:

Spiders, ants and beetles.

Eggs:

Single female can produce 800 – 1,000 eggs, laid singly or in clusters of 2 or 3. Eggs are attached to vegetation and hatch in 2-3 days.

Tadpoles:

First two weeks spent in leaf litter on bottom of the pond, later eating algae. Dorsal color olive brown to dark green with metallic gold flecks. Belly creamy and iridescent, tail musculature pale and uniformly pigmented or blotched, edges of tail fins blotched or mottled with purplish black.

Wood frog

Rana sylvatica

Description:

1 3/8" – 2 3/4" (3.5 – 7 cm). Pink, tan or dark brown, prominent dark mask (robbers mask) through the eye ending abruptly at the eardrums, dorsolateral ridges same color as body, light stripe on upper lip, some may have a light middorsal stripe, dark blotch on chest near base of each front leg, belly white, toes not fully webbed. Skin smooth to finely wrinkled, occasionally with warts and small glandular ridges, between dorsolateral folds.

Call description:

A series of hoarse, short, raspy duck-like quacks with little carrying power. Often the first species heard calling in the spring.

Indiana range:

Throughout Indiana with exception to the northwest prairie region.

Habitat:

In or near moist wooded areas, forested bottomlands and margins of lakes. Adults are rarely found in the water except during breeding season.

Breeding Habitat:

Bogs, temporary forested wetlands, margins of forested lakes and backwaters of streams.

Breeding Season:

End of February – April

Diet:

Terrestrial insects and other arthropods.

Eggs:

Large, dense globular masses of up to 3,000 eggs attached to aquatic vegetation, about the size of softball. Egg masses are often laid communally and hatch within three weeks.

Tadpoles:

Olive or brown on body and tail with greenish tint; pinkish iridescence underneath. Transform within 6-9 weeks and reach maturity in 2-4 years.